

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3468

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UNCLAS CANBERRA 3901

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, AS

SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL MEAT TRADE PROBLEMS

REF: (A) CANBERRA 3900

(B) CANBERRA 3718

(C) CANBERRA 3655

(D) STATE 110296

1. REF (A) SUMMARIZED MAIN POINTS OF LETTER FROM BRIAN HILL, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OVERSEAS TRADE, IN RESPONSE TO EMBASSY LETTER OF MAY 30 BASED ON REF (D).

2. TEXT OF JUNE 21 GOA LETTER FOLLOWS (UNESSENTIAL WORDS OMITTED).

3. QTE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ALSO DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT UNCLASSIFIED

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS INTERNATIONAL MEAT TRADE AND MEASURES

INTRODUCED BY SOME COUNTRIES TO SEVERELY RESTRICT IMPORTS OF BEEF AND IN CASE OF EC TO SUBSIDIZE MEAT EXPORTS.

AS YOU AWARE, MINISTER OVERSEAS TRADE CAIRNS ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT JUNE 13 EXPRESSING GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN ABOUT GROWTH IN TRADE BARRIERS AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL MEAT TRADE. COPY OF MINISTER'S PRESS STATEMENT ATTACHED.

YOU WILL NOTE THAT IN STATEMENT CAIRNS REFERS TO HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATIONS WHICH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE TO JAPAN AND EEC IN RESPECT OF ACTION THEY HAVE TAKEN AND WHICH IS HAVING SEVERE EFFECTS ON AUSTRALIA'S BEEF TRADE. IN THOSE REPRESENTATIONS WE ALSO MADE PARTICULAR POINT OF EMPHASIZING THAT APART FROM DIRECT EFFECTS ON AUSTRALIA'S EXPORTS OF BEEF, THE ACTION TAKEN COULD HAVE SERIOUS FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTINUING STABILITY OF WORLD MEAT TRADE AS A WHOLE. WE SOUGHT CONSULTATIONS WITH BOTH JAPAN AND EEC AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY. CONSULTATIONS WITH EEC SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE BRUSSELS 27 AND 28 OF THIS MONTH. WE AWAIT ADVICE FROM JAPANESE ON DATE FOR OUR CONSULTATIONS.

I WOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION PARTICULARLY TO PART OF MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN WHICH HE MAKES POINT AUSTRALIA WOULD BE MUCH CONCERNED IF AFTER TIME IN WHICH WE ACTED RESPONSIBLY IN MAINTAINING SUPPLIES OF MEAT IN SITUATION OF SHORTAGE AND HIGH PRICES IMPORTERS WERE NOW IN TURN AROUND AND SEVERELY RESTRICT ACCESS TO THEIR MARKETS IN LIGHT OF WEAKENING IN DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY.

IT IS IN SAME SPIRIT THAT LOOKING AHEAD MINISTER POINTED TO NEED FOR IMPORTING AND EXPORTING NATIONS TO WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER TO STABILIZE AND MAKE MORE PREDICTABLE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN MEAT. WE BELIEVE EXPORTING COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT BE CALLED UPON TO BEAR FULL BURDEN OF MEASURES TAKEN IN UNPREDICTABLE AND POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE MANNER IN IMPORTING COUNTRIES IN RESPONSE TO DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTED BY THEIR OWN LIVESTOCK INDUSTRIES.

MINISTER WENT ON TO FORESHADOW NEED FOR MAJOR INTERNATIONAL UNCLASSIFIED

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COOPERATIVE EFFORT IN WHICH HE INDICATED AUSTRALIA WOULD PLAY A LEADING ROLE.

THIS CALL BY MINISTER IN LINE WITH APPROACH WHICH YOU CANVASS IN YOUR LETTER AND INDICATES PUBLICLY THAT AUSTRALIA AS WORLD'S LEADING EXPORTER OF BEEF AND VEAL IS FIRMLY IN FAVOR OF MULTILATERAL ENDEAVOR DESIGNED TO BRING ABOUT MORE STABLE AND ORDERLY INTERNATIONAL MARKETING OF

MEAT.

AS REGARDS SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, CLEARLY THIS IS MATTER WHICH WILL REQUIRE CLOSEST ATTENTION TO DETAIL IF THERE IS TO BE A DEGREE OF SUCCESS. WE BELIEVE EARLY ACTION REQUIRED TO BRING TOGETHER THOSE EXPORTING AND IMPORTING COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE PRINCIPAL INTERESTS IN PRODUCTION AND TRADE IN BEEF. WE WOULD SEE SUCH A MEETING DISCUSSING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WORLDTRADE AND WORKING TOWARDS DEVISING WAYS AND MEANS WHEREBY, THROUGH SOME SYSTEM OF CONSULTATIONS, IT IS POSSIBLE TO AVOID EITHER EXPORTERS OR IMPORTERS TAKING UNILATERAL AND ABRUPT ACTION WHICH WOULD CUT ACROSS ON THE ONE HAND, IMPORTERS' INTERESTS IN HAVING ASSURED AND STABLE SUPPLIES OF MEAT AND, ON THE OTHER, EXPORTERS' INTERESTS IN HAVING ASSURED AND PREDICTABLE ACCESS TO WORL MARKETS. THE BASIC AIM AS WE SEE IT WOULD BE TO ESTABLISH SYSTEM OF MEANINGFUL AND EFFECTIVE CONSULTATIONS BASED ON ACCEPTANCE OF MUTUAL INTER-DEPENDENCE BOTH OF CONSUMING AND PRODUCING COUNTRIES.

WE DO NOT HAVE FIRM VIEWS ON WAYS OF MOUNTING SUCH CONSULTATIONS.

IT WOULD SEEM THERE IS NEED AT LEAST FOR SOME SPECIAL FORUM. CONSIDERATION COULD BE GIVEN TO ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL MEAT COUNCIL. FOR OUR PART WE HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH WORK WHICH VARIOUS INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMODITY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO IN MONITORING MARKET DEVELOPMENTS AND PROVIDING FORUM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND CONSULTATION ON ORDERLY MARKETING OF COMMODITY CONCERNED. IN THIS CONNECTION THE RECENT STATEMENT BY MR. R.E. BELL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND COMMODITY PROGRAMS, UNCLASSIFIED

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BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, ON EXTENSION OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT IS ONE WE HAVE NOTED WITH INTEREST. ALTERNATIVELY GATT COULD PROVIDE SUCH FORUM BY WAY OF ESTABLISHMENT OF SAY A MEAT CONSULTATIVE GROUP.

WE PROPOSE OF COURSE TO EXPLORE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES DURING SERIES OF BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON MEAT WHICH WE WILL BE HAVING IN COMING WEEKS. IN MEANTIME WE WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE AN INDICATION OF UNITED STATES THINKING ON THE SCOPE FOR SUCH TALKS AND THE APPROPRIATE MEANS OF CONVENING THEM. END QTE.
GREEN

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